



USA TODAY NETWORK

17 dead at Fla. school

The suspect taken into custody is a former student who was identified as a threat to others, teacher says

USA TODAY, 1B

The Desert Sun

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PALM SPRINGS MODERNISM WEEK



Frank Sinatra sits in a deck chair beside the pool at his Palm Springs home and reads a script for his film "Marriage on the Rocks" in 1965. TIME & LIFE PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES

Sinatra film to premiere

Documentary depicts details of singer's life in Palm Springs

Xochitl Pena Palm Springs Desert Sun | USA TODAY NETWORK

As local lore has it, everyone was best friends with Frank Sinatra and was on a first-name basis with the blue-eyed crooner.

That's what Rancho Mirage resident Leo Zahn discovered when he moved to the desert about seven years ago.

"This is very unique about this place. Somehow, the myth of Sinatra is very much alive. And you hear people in bars, restaurants, tell stories, tall tales. 'Oh, I knew Frank. We were

friends.' And you wonder, wait a minute. This can't be. Is this true?" wondered Zahn a filmmaker who has directed and photographed more than 600 commercials throughout his career.

So he set out to make a whimsical film about all the myths surrounding Sinatra in the desert. But then he met socialite and philanthropist Nelda Linsk who actually knew Sinatra and was a close friend of his last wife, Barbara Sinatra. That

See SINATRA, Page 8A

Rancho Mirage opts out of traffic project

\$75 million CVAG plan would sync road signals

Nicole Hayden Palm Springs Desert Sun USA TODAY NETWORK

Rancho Mirage has opted out of another regional project led by the Coachella Valley Association of Governments.

First it was the CV Link, now Rancho Mirage is saying "no" to the traffic signal synchronization project that includes every other city in the valley. CVAG officials say Rancho Mirage's non-participation creates a problematic hole in the system, while city officials say they want sole control over their city's traffic lights.

The \$75 million project aims to synchronize all traffic signals in the valley to improve traffic flow and the region's air quality. CVAG argues that the project must be a regional project, as opposed to a city-by-city project, to ensure that traffic flow is seamless.

CVAG's Executive Committee is slated to vote on the project for final approval on Feb. 26. Rancho Mirage is the only city that has notified CVAG that they will not be participating in the project so far. However, Indian Wells abstained from the CVAG Technical Advisory Committee vote on Feb. 12.

"The goal is that motorists will experience fewer stops, which translates

See TRAFFIC, Page 9A

IW councilman to residents: Remove old trees

Nicole Hayden Palm Springs Desert Sun USA TODAY NETWORK

An Indian Wells councilman has asked the city to an draft ordinance to hold private property owners accountable for damage caused by their aging palm trees.

While he said there have been no serious injuries yet, Mayor Pro-Tem Ted Mertens said he is concerned about the well-being of citizens on private property and potential injuries to residents.

The ordinance would require property owners to have palm trees on their private property evaluated periodically

"to help ensure that neighboring properties, as well as their own, would not be damaged by the failure of older trees."

Indian Wells has a Tree Replacement Program that requires the city to have a study completed by a certified arborist every couple years to identify tree health within the city limits, but there's

no program directed at private properties, said Nancy Samuelson, Indian Wells marketing director.

The city recently had all of the palm trees on city property evaluated and many were found to be at "end of life."

See PALM TREES, Page 5A

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT CALIFORNIA, 15A



Los Angeles Police Capt. Stephen Carmona, right, speaks at a news conference about cannabis enforcement in Los Angeles on Wednesday. Los Angeles has issued licenses to nearly 100 cannabis retailers but police estimate there are at least two times that number operating illegally in the city. AP

USA TODAY

S. Korea paying the way for N. Korea at Olympics

South Korea is paying the bill for hundreds of members of North Korea's delegation to the Winter Olympics. The South and North Exchange Cooperation Promotion Council agreed to use \$2.64 million from the South Korean government for the North's expenses. The International Olympic Committee is picking up the tab for 22 North Korean athletes. 1B

RM wins playoff game

Rancho Mirage exploded for 32 points in the game's final 12 minutes of play to take down Tustin High 65-40 in the opening round of the CIF Division 3AA playoffs on Wednesday night. Meanwhile, La Quinta fell 72-50 to visiting Marina High in the CIF Division 3A playoff game. 1C

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